

Thomas Jefferson to Tench Coxe, May 1, 1794, The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO TENCH COXE J. MSS.

Monticello, May 1, 1794.

Dear Sir, —Your several favors of Feb. 22, 27, & March 16. which had been accumulating in Richmond during the prevalence of the small pox in that place, were lately brought to me, on the permission given the post to resume his communication. I am particularly to thank you for your favor in forwarding the Bee. Your letters give a comfortable view of French affairs, and later events seem to confirm it. Over the foreign powers I am convinced they will triumph completely, & I cannot but hope that that triumph, & the consequent disgrace of the invading tyrants, is destined, in the order of events, to kindle the wrath of the people of Europe against those who have dared to embroil them in such wickedness, and to bring at length, kings, nobles, & priests to the scaffolds which they have been so long deluging with human blood. I am still warm whenever I think of these scoundrels, tho I do it as seldom as I can, preferring infinitely to contemplate the tranquil growth of my lucerne & potatoes. I have so completely withdrawn myself from these spectacles of usurpation & misrule, that I do not take a single newspaper, nor read one a month; & I feel myself infinitely the happier for it. We are alarmed here with the apprehensions of war; and sincerely anxious that it may be avoided; but not at the expense either of our faith or honor. It seems much the general opinion here, that the latter has been too much wounded not to require reparation, & to seek it even in war, if that be necessary. As to myself, I love peace, and I am anxious that we should give the world still another useful lesson, by showing to them other modes of punishing injuries

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than by war, which is as much a punishment to the punisher as to the sufferer. I love, therefore, mr. Clarke's proposition of cutting off all communication with the nation which has conducted itself so atrociously. This, you will say, may bring on war. If it does, we will meet it like men; but it may not bring on war, & then the experiment will have been a happy one. I believe this war would be vastly more unanimously approved than any one we ever were engaged in; because the aggressions have been so wanton & bare-faced, and so unquestionably against our desire.—I am sorry mr. Cooper & Priestly did not take a more general survey of our country before they fixed themselves. I think they might have promoted their own advantage by it, and have aided the introduction of our improvement where it is more wanting. The prospect of wheat for the ensuing year is a bad one. This is all the sort of news you can expect from me. From you I shall be glad to hear all sort of news, & particularly any improvements in the arts applicable to husbandry or household manufacture.